



# Washington State Auditor's Office

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

July 26, 2016

Mayor and City Council  
City of Bellingham  
Bellingham, Washington

### REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, Washington, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2015, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the City's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the City's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the City's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

## **Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, Washington, as of December 31, 2015, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

## **Matters of Emphasis**

As described in Note III, during the year ended December 31, 2015, the City has implemented the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 68, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions – an amendment of GASB Statement No. 27*. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

## **Other Matters**

### ***Required Supplementary Information***

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 3-1 through 3-11, budgetary comparison information on pages 5-1 and through 5-2, pension plan information on pages 5-3 through 5-7, and information on postemployment benefits other than pensions on pages 5-7 through 5-8, be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

### ***Supplementary and Other Information***

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the City's basic financial statements. The accompanying information listed as combining financial statements and supplementary information on pages 6-1 through 6-68 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. This information has been subjected to auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other

records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

The information identified in the table of contents as the Introductory Section, Statistical Section and Single Audit Section is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements of the City. Such information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

#### **OTHER REPORTING REQUIRED BY GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we will also issue our report dated July 26, 2016, on our consideration of the City's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. That report will be issued under separate cover in the City's Single Audit Report. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the City's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Troy X. Kelley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

TROY KELLEY

STATE AUDITOR

OLYMPIA, WA